DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 205 093 HE 014 119

AUTHOR Martorana, S. V.; Kuhns, Eileen
TITLE Beyond the Institution: Institutional Research for Inter-institutional Action. AIR Forum 1981 Paper.
PUB DATE May 81
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research (21st, Minneapolis, MN, May 17-20, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Curriculum; College Programs; Comparative Analysis; Consortia; *Cooperative Planning; Cooperative Programs; Decision Making; *Higher Education; *Institutional Cooperation; *Institutional Research; *Intercollegiate Cooperation; Needs Assessment; Policy Formation; *Regional Cooperation; Regional Programs; State Surveys; Statewide Planning
IDENTIFIERS *AIR Forum

ABSTRACT

The role of institutional research in postsecondary education in view of the trend toward consortia, regionalism, and other manifestations of "communiversity" or interinstitutional action is evaluated. Attention is also directed to new modes for policy planning and decision-making. Four activities were conducted in order to better understand new roles: a literature review, a statewide cooperative study of academic program coexistence and comparative characteristics in over 200 institutions, a regional interstate project supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), and a telephone survey of college officials responsible for institutional research. A large scale comparative study of academic programs at over 200 postsecondary institutions was conducted in a large eastern state, and the outcome included descriptions of the 5,000 degree programs offered by an institution or by aggregate arrangements to the wider public. Other outcomes have been users' manuals designed to permit interinstitutional comparisons, particularly as a basis for regional postsecondary planning. The FIPSE project focused on the feasibility of comprehensive postsecondary cooperative action in natural geographic and socioeconomic planning regions divided by state boundaries. Activities were designed to assess regionwide needs for postsecondary educational programs and services, available resources, and barriers that impede use of the resources. Telephone interviews with college officials revealed that few institutional research efforts were directed toward interinstitutional action or actual involvement of an external policy center. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED205093

52

BEYOND THE INSTITUTION: INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH FOR INTER-INSTITUTIONAL ACTION

S. V. Martorana
Professor, College of Education, and Research Associate,
Center for the Study of Higher Education
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16801 (814-865-8367)

and

Eileen Kuhns
Coordination and Associate Professor
Education Administration Program
Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C. 20064 (202-635-5810)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Association for Institutional Research

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

HE 014 119

THE ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

This paper was presented at the Twenty-First Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research held at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 17-20, 1981. This paper was reviewed by the AIR Forum Publications Committee and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC Collection of Forum Papers.

Mary Corcoran
University of Minnesota
(Editor, AIR Forum Publications)

Abstract

Postsecondary educational institutions are increasingly called upon to act with others and with noneducationally directed organizations and agencies in planning for the '80s and beyond. The result is heightened activity and interest in consortia, regionalism, and other manifestations of "communiversity" or interinstitutional as opposed to individual institutional action; as these organizational changes occur, there is also an evident increase in need to relate to new centers for policy planning and decision making. Within these growing new trends, the roles of institutional research and of professional institutional researchers are as yet undefined and unrecognized. This paper examines current understanding of these roles; it is based on four activities: (a) a review of literature; (b) experience with a statewide cooperative study of academic program coexistence and comparative characteristics in over 200 institutions; (c) a regional interstate project supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE); and (d) a survey of college officials responsible for institutional research. The paper concludes with tentative generalizations for use by institutional researchers and others for further examination and discussion.

Introduction

Institutional research as a function essential to sound administrative leadership and action in higher education is a relatively new development. In contrast to positions like those expected to give chief administrative attention to the academic, student, and business spheres of collegiate operations which have attracted notice for literally hundreds of years, that expected to give similar direction to institutional research has an identity of only three or four decades. The role of institutional research and of institutional researchers in the leadership function of academe, therefore, is still very much in the making.

Given that fact, persons interested in institutional research, either as a field of practice or as one of special study, need to be especially understanding of the changing context of higher education as the change occurs. That understanding is essential because institutions change as the context within which they operate changes. Since institutional research, by definition, is aimed at providing the best informed basis for institutional policy and decision making, shifts in all factors whether internal to the institution or external to it which bear on the institution and so can cause it to change have also the potential for causing change in the role of institutional research.

Key to any serious current examination of the role of institutional research in today's context of higher education and that likely to be for some time, then, is the fact that colleges and universities are no longer (if in fact they ever were) isolated organizational entities.

The full nature of the changing organizational setting should be noted. It is not simply the development of larger complexes of officially

interrelated public colleges and universities, the drift termed "from autonomy to systems" which has attracted considerable research attention in recent years (Harcleroad, 1973; Education Commission of the States, 1980). It is also the emergence of new complexes akin to the notion of the "communiversity." Gould (1969) and the present authors (1977, 1978a) among others, have noted this emergence and attempts to define it more precisely are continuing; "communiversity," as now usually portrayed depicts any new form of interorganizational arrangement which brings together organizations with different types of interest and involvement in postsecondary education or cultural service in order to provide in their aggregate operations more complete and effective as well as efficient programs of instruction, public service, and research needed by their several clienteles. The concept encompasses voluntary and mandated consortia as defined by Patterson (1979), regional configurations (Martorana and Nespoli, 1978), and other types of agreements and linkages. A question already raised (Martorana and Nespoli, 1978) and one certain to attract increasing research attention is: What changes in the structure and process of planning, policy formation, and decision making in postsecondary education will occur as these new organizational structures emerge?

If the discussion this far is valid, institutional researchers should be expected to be alert to and already examining their roles and functions within the changes toward increased interorganizational operations that are taking place. This paper presents the results of an examination of the indicated expection gained from four lines of inquiry: (1) a review of the literature on interinstitutional research for interinstitutional action; (2) the experience of the co-authors in conducting a study of over 5000 academic programs in a large eastern state; (3) an ongoing project sponsored by the

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) focusing on postsecondary opportunities in two natural demographic (socio-economic and geographic planning) regions; and (4) a telephone survey of institutional researchers or their surrogates in five regions around the country.

We emphasize that in these inquiries we were pressing beyond the impact of the shift on the part of public institutions from "autonomy to systems" and searching more for the awareness of the shift toward "communiversity" developments. There are two reasons for taking this posture in the inquiry reported here: One is that the impact of this first type of shift is relatively well identified and getting considerable notice; the other is the belief on the part of the authors that the two types of organizational shift are quite different and therefore merit discrete and different research and analytical attention.

Of Literature There Is But Little

Contrary to the expectation suggested above, institutional researchers and others interested in defining their professional roles and operations have not yet focused strong attention on the question herein posed. Only a few relevant publications are listed among those published since 1975 and touching on institutional research. Generally speaking, they report the experience of a particular interinstitutional venture and the use of or influence on institutional research. None examines precisely the main theme of this paper either from the view of its general application or from a theoretical perspective.

One work which is well-known among institutional researchers, however, provides an excellent examination basically related to the subject of this discussion. Marvin Peterson and a dozen colleagues in 1976 produced a baseline volume in the field of interinstitutional research entitled

Benefiting from Interinstitutional Research. This work reflects the realities of the times: that state higher education agencies, many of them in coordinating roles, were by then present in all states (Folger and Orwig, 1976); that computer networks of increasing sophistication provided the underlying technology for a substantial proportion of the comparisons (Norris and Heydinger, 1976); and perhaps most important, that political issues inherent in comparative interinstitutional research were at least as important as research or information issues. In an overview of the volume Peterson cautiously concluded that "Whether the results are beneficial--whether they improve the quality and functioning of our higher education institutions or systems--is still conjectural" (1976, p. 101).

Whether the results are regarded as beneficial may depend on the purpose of the interinstitutional research effort, which by definition in the Peterson volume inevitably involves insterinstitutional comparison. As he states,

> In the context of this volume interinstitutional research refers to studies which focus on the characteristics or dynamics of the whole institution (or major segments of it) as the unit of analysis and examine them in relation to those characteristics or dynamics in other institutions (or segments of them). The important element is that data on environmental conditions, inputs, internal organizational processes or structures, resources, membership characteristics, outcomes or other variables are collected from several institutions and that each has a value of the variable associated with it. (p. vii)

His definition, he adds, does not delimit the agency conducting the research, nor the types of studies, which may be descriptive, analytic, or causal modeling. Such descriptive studies would "compare institutions on particular characteristics;" the analytic studies would "examine relationships between variables across a set of institutions;" and the causal modeling studies of variable interaction would "describe the dynamics of the institution" (p.vii).

Peterson stresses the importance of clearly defining the purpose of the interinstitutional research, in terms of both its focus and its use. Herein lies the difference between the phenomenon (Peterson et al) described in 1976 and that which we see emerging in the 1980s: the explicit purpose of the first is interinstitutional comparison; the purpose of the second is inter-institutional action. In other respects the two types of interinstitutional research may be similar in that neither delimits the agency conducting the research, and the supporting studies may be descriptive, analytic, or those of causal modeling.

We see a positive and sigificant relationship between the gradual emergence of what we call "action interinstitutional research" (as defined by Peterson) ~~and which he~~ (distinguished from "comparative interinstitutional research," and the main thrust of the inquiry of this paper, namely, ~~in~~interstitutional research conducted by individual institutions but serving to support action by organizations external to them.

To discover any additional references relevant to interinstitutional research for interinstitutional and external organizational "action" an ERIC search was conducted for the period 1975-1981. The working definition included purpose, focus, and use, i.e., institutional research: (1) for the purpose of enhancing postsecondary education beyond as well as within the participating institutions; (2) focused on the needs of education consumers as well as on the concerns of participating institutions; and (3) planned primarily for use as a resource for action to improve educational opportunity, rather than as a vehicle for interinstitutional comparison.

With descriptors such as institutional cooperation, consortia, regional cooperation, cooperative planning, regional programs, cooperative programs, and institutional research, as well as postsecondary education, adult

education, college and university, the automated search yielded 28 items. (Half of them were in the New Directions for Institutional Research series, sponsored by the Association for Institutional Research and published by Jossey-Bass.)

Fifteen of the 28 items focused on concerns within the institution, albeit other institutions or diverse parts of the same institution were involved in various ways. These items, thus, were excluded from further consideration. Of the remaining 13 ERIC selections, nine focused on "comparative" interinstitutional research, and thus were of secondary importance in the development of this paper.

Of the four remaining papers, by strict definition all but one also focused on concerns within the institution. Topics included arrangements as one response to financial restraints experienced by "poorer" higher education institutions (Partee-Scott, 1979); a consortium-based arrangement for planning and conducting mission-oriented educational research (Wilson, 1976); and the regional preparation of institutional researchers (Pierce, 1979). The final document summarizes a national assembly sponsored by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges which focused on barriers inhibiting the development and provision of performance-oriented and community-based postsecondary education (Schenkman, 1974). Only the last reference includes the purpose, focus, and use noted above for action interinstitutional research, but the assembly's resources could hardly be called "institutional research." In truth, then, as yet there is no "literature" on this emerging phenomenon.

Conducting a Large Scale Comparative Study of Academic Programs

In 1975 two statewide organizations located in a large eastern state and representing together over 200 colleges, universities and proprietary schools

decided to seek funding and sponsor a study of all their degree-granting programs, in part because of a possibility that the state higher education agency was itself considering a similar project. The co-authors of this paper became the project supervisor and project director, respectively, of this eighteen month study which was funded by three foundations and resulted in a voluminous technical report to the state agency (Kuhns and Martorana, 1977). The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Forum presentations on this project were made in Montreal in 1977 (Martorana and Kuhns, 1978b) and in Atlanta in 1980 (Martorana and Kuhns, 1980). Although the study began with preliminary information on each degree program provided by the state agency, there was a sustained effort to keep the unit records describing printouts of individual program descriptors, but the state agency was permitted to have only aggregate information during the life of the project. The balance of power between the state institutions may be altered by information available for comparative analyses. Hansen (1976), describing the activities of Council of Ontario Universities' research programs, states it well:

> Information represents power and is never neutral. The qualitative aspects of university life have a difficult time holding their own in the face of onslaughts of data showing low teaching workloads, small class sizes, large costs per student, and the like. The decisions academics would like to control tend to become more centralized. (p. 99)

Writing in a volume on evaluating statewide boards, Odegaard lists one evaluation criterion "the extent to which they encourage voluntary interinstitutional cooperation" (1975, p. 87). The experience described above was a massive voluntary effort in interinstitutional cooperation, one which profited by a two-tiered advisory arrangement to provide liaison between the ongoing project and the participating institutions. Both groups had institutional researchers in their membership. One group comprised

largely of institutional presidents, gave overall policy direction to the effort, while the other advisory group with much heavier representation of institutional researchers on it provided technical advice.

Beyond the multi-faceted description of the 5000 degree programs available by individual program to the institutions and in a variety of aggregate arrangments to the wider public, other outcomes have been simplified users' manuals designed to permit various kinds of interinstitutional comparisons, particularly as a basis for regional postsecondary planning (Holmes, 1979). Periodic updating of such data is strongly encouraged, but presents a difficult problem in this era of decreasing resources. (The 5000 unit records are, of course, computer-based, although amazingly the initial budget for the project included not a dollar for data processing for which, of course, other arrangements eventually had to be made.) As of this writing some of the institutions in this state still question the wisdom of providing detailed program information to a state agency for comparative purposes, but thanks to some of the regional organizations, also poorly funded, there appears to be some acceptance of the worth of "action" interinstitutional research, as defined earlier. Some of the institutions in this state currently are involved with those in another adjoining state in one of two regional projects now to be discussed which further exemplify interinstitutional research for interinstitutional action of concern to the thrust of inquiry of this paper.

A Regional Interstate Project

Illustrative of the way institutional researchers can be both affected by and in turn influence institutional research for interinstitutional action is illustrated well by a project funded by the Fund for the Improvement of

Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). Co-directed by the authors of this paper the project seeks to demonstrate comprehensive planning for the regionwide development of postsecondary education in two natural, socio economic and geographic planning regions divided by state lines. The two regions are the Upper Allegheny Region, having parts of New York and Pennsylvania, and the Eastern Gulfcoast Region, including parts of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Institutional researchers in the colleges of the two regions had relatively little involvement in the initial stage of the project; commitment to it was made by the presidents of the institutions. In project implementation, however, the role of institutional research has become central. Design of the project calls for two interinstitutional, interstate working groups: One is a Regional Task Force of Liaison Institutional Representatives, another is a Regional Council for Postsecondary Educational Development, the latter comprised totally of citizen, lay leaders in the regions. Institutional researchers or officials carrying primary responsibility for this function are heavily represented among those designated by college presidents to be on the two Regional Task Forces. In their capacity they have voiced strong influence on what data can and should be compiled and how ~~it~~ they can be reported.

The FIPSE project focuses on the feasibility of comprehensive postsecondary cooperative action in natural geographic and socio-economic planning regions divided by state boundaries. Activities are planned (1) to assess regionwide needs for postsecondary educational programs and services, (2) to identify and describe comprehensively and regionwide the resources that may be utilized to meet these needs, (3) to identify barriers that obstruct or impede full utilization of the resources available (including as

a barrier the existence of state boundaries which cut through the region), and (4) to formulate and launch plans, strategies, and actions to eliminate or reduce the effect of these barriers.

Every recognized postsecondary institution in each of the regions described holds membership in the region's Task Force Liaison Group, which meets regularly to plan ongoing activities and to provide general guidance to the project staff. Other participants include those from state organizations and agencies. As already noted, some of the task force members function as institutional research officers in their own institutions, although most have other responsibilities, for example, academic vice president, vice president for administration, president, executive dean, and so on. Regardless of the specific role in postsecondary education, the members of this group focus on information needed for improving postsecondary educational opportunities, beyond as well as within their institutions. Information identified or in some cases actually gathered for this project does not have a comparative purpose, but is solely for the purpose of facilitating action within the region. As the project draws to a close in 1982, accomplishment of two objectives is expected: one is the takeover of the project by the institutions and organizations represented by the Task Force Liaison group and the other goal is to continue the Regional Council for broader direction. In this way, institutional and extrainstitutional information will continue to be gathered, analyzed, and disseminated in order to enhance postsecondary education in the region. Presumably institutional researchers in the participating institutions will have an increasing role in this activity.

Survey of Officials Responsible for Institutional Research

Postsecondary institutions in five natural socio-economic, demographic

and geographic planning regions of the country were selected by the co-authors for a telephone survey requesting information about "any study or analysis done to provide a basis for policy planning and decision making involving an institution or organization other than (the respondent's own) college or university." The five regions were these: the Portland-Vancouver region on the West Coast; the Kansas City area in the mid-West; the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area, and the two forementioned FIPSE project regions in the Upper Allegheny and the Eastern Gulfcoast areas of the country. Portions of 12 states and the District of Columbia are included in these five natural demographic regions, all of which are divided by state lines, thus making interinstitutional efforts also interstate. In each of the five regions all postsecondary institutions listed in the Education Directory, Colleges and Universities, 1979-1980, published by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), were included in the group to which the survey was directed. Using this source and the 1980-81 Directory of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), the co-authors attempted to identify the person most likely to be primarily responsible for the function in each of the 103 institutions included. In some cases, it was indeed the Director of an Institutional Research Office, but in many cases either the office, or even the recognized function, was absent. In a number of instances the person eventually responding was the academic dean or even the president. Within the five regions, the 103 collegiate institutions were distributed as follows: (1) Portland-Vancouver: 20; (2) KC/KC: 23; (3) Upper Allegheny 15; (4) Eastern Gulfcoast: 15; (5) District of Columbia: 30. Telephone talks were successfully completed in each region with representation of over three-fourths of the institutions.

If the initial question stated above was stated in the negative, the

interview was terminated with thanks. If an affirmative response was forth-coming, several other questions followed, designed to obtain a range of information including the other institutions involved in the project, and whether they are located in another state; the area(s) (facilities, personnel, programs, and so on) touched by the project; the time of he project in terms of beginning and ending if finished, as well as future schedule, if any, for similar projects; the availability of results and from whom; those at the respondent's or other institutions involved in project administration; any information as to cost at the respondent's institution as well as at other institutions; the source of money, including proportions if from multiple sources; the locus of the fiscal agent and that of the person responsible for project administration; the dissemination of the results, by whom and when, and with what outcomes; and finally, any plans for new or additional project/ analyses involving other institutions as well as the respondents, and, if the response was affirmative, whether the plans are in the "talk stage" or seriously planned.

For the purposes of this paper only summary information resulting from these interviews will be advanced. Before doing so, it should be made clear that several types of indicated interinstitutional research action were excluded by definition, for example, participation in data gathering for databases involving other institutions and perhaps coordinated by a state office or a national association, such as the annual Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) reports or the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) salary surveys. Many institutions noted these kinds of interinstitutional participation.

The most important conclusion is that the kinds of projects primarily sought by this inquiry, those which could form the basis for interinstitutional

action beyond the individual responding institution, are still few in number. There were some projects reported, however, which touched closely on the inquiry. Conducted variously on regular, intermittent or as one-time ventures, they involved more than one institution and were planned as a resource for interinstitutional action, but typically did not clearly involve policy planning and action by external interests. Examples would be efforts preparing for or evaluating programs; cross-registration; multi-institutional economic impact studies; manpower needs analyses; and tracking students between adjacent two- and four-year institutions.

The larger volume of such interinstitutional projects we noted appears to occur when there is a bond among institutions which goes beyond contiguity, for example, a group of public community colleges that collectively wish to register a recommendation with a recalcitrant state agency and together plan and implement a study to support the recommendation to establish a multi-institutional management information system; or a group of religiously affiliated institutions that study student migration from one of their colleges to another. A generalization which might be advanced very tentatively is that the more central the study is to the viability of the institutions involved, the more apt are the participants to have links other than geographic proximity. Other research (Martorana and Nespoli, 1981) shows that institutions with a geographic proximity which also have other associational linkages tend to associate more according to the non-geographic commonality rather than the geographic proximity. Another relationship that appears to emerge is that comparative studies of central importance to institutional functioning (financial management, program development, and so on) have as their usual participants those who cannot avoid doing so, such as public colleges with accountability to a state agency, or private colleges

governed and in part supported by a central body such as colleges in a system of church-related institutions.

Reports received indicated so few institutional research efforts directed toward interinstitutional action with implications for actual involvement of an external policy center that there is insufficient evidence on which to generalize further about the nature of the prospects reported. Some related observations about the role of the institutional researchers, however, are possible. Whether comparison or action-oriented, the institutional research done for interinstitutional purposes in almost all cases was reported overwhelmingly to be simply carried as part of the load of the office responsible for the function in the college or university. This is true particularly if there is ongoing consortium activity, and as a result, the person, and thus the institution with expertise in the field of ad hoc studies, may be "volunteered" for the job. Although institutional researchers may both suggest interinstitutional studies and be responsible for carrying them out, unless institutional presidents consider the study valuable, it is not apt to be undertaken.

Conclusion

From their observations and experience in the two major interinstitutional projects, and the telephone talks in which they discussed interinstitutional research activity and the role of institutional research with persons close to the scene of action, the co-authors distilled a number of generalizations pertinent to the main inquiry of this paper. They are believed to hold considerable significance to institutional researchers and the role they are likely to play if the trend toward "communiversity" type interorganizational development continues. We emphasize, however, that the line of inquiry exerted in this work and the level of research interest and

action being applied to it represent merely an opening of the entire subject for much more extensive and penetrating examination, not a set of firm and fully established conclusions. The propositions to follow, then, are to be viewed more as questions or hypotheses needing further research ~~rather~~ than as recommended principles for policy planning or related action. Stated topically and discussed briefly the three main generalizations suggested are:

1. Institutional research continues to be fundamentally centered on individual institutional purposes.--Out of the nearly one hundred colleges contacted in the telephone survey, only a few reported use of institutional research resources for purposes of policy and decision making to guide organizations external to the specific institution contacted. Two exceptions to this statement were noted: very clear recognition of this use and nearly universal reporting of its existence as a trend was reported with respect to (1) the increasing calls by large public systems of postsecondary education of which the responding college was a part, and (2) the participation of private colleges and universities in the compilation and reporting of data needed by a state organization of independent colleges and universities. In the former case, reports indicated the nature of the institutional research to be largely one of providing enrollment projections, data on students, program plans, fiscal information and the like as called for by the larger system. In the latter case, the information ~~printed~~ provided by the colleges was reported to be focused largely on student enrollment, need for financial aid, tuition and other costs of college attendance, and related information needed by the state association for two purposes: one, to seek private support for the institutions and, two, to seek public support for students attending private colleges.

Except for these two general exceptions, the few instances which were reported of institutional research being devoted to largely external

organizational purposes did not lend to generalizations. Those discovered were idiosyncratic in purpose, substance of program, mode of operations, and sources of support.

2. Justification of institutional research completed for organizations beyond the individual institution still rests on the usefulness to the reporting institution.--Respondents to the survey calls clearly reflected a common view that the reporting college was expected to benefit from institutional research whether or not it was initiated by forces within the college itself or from an outside interest. Respondents observed the activity provided by the institutional research consistently as turning back to the benefit of the reporting institution. Thus, even when done for a larger public system, a statewide association of independent colleges, or for a special project, main motivation for participating was the individual college, not the external entity as a recognized new and separate body. In this connection, we should make a note of a related point stemming from descriptions of interinstitutional projects reported elsewhere; the point is that there seems to be stronger likelihood of continued interinstitutional effort when there exists both a purpose which cuts across but also reaches beyond the participating institutions and a "starred" or especially designated locus of responsibility for attending to that purpose. Illustrations are the University of Mid-America's cooperative programming in instruction (McBride, 1978) and Mississippi State University's consortium institutional research service for public school districts (Saterfiel, 1978).

3. Institutions engaged in institutional research for purposes of external interests show low-level recognition of the external interest, the ultimate purpose to which the institutional research will finally be put, and of its impact in the institution, actual or potential.--A number of factors

emerged from the interviews to support this statement. One was that commitments to provide institutional research service for external interests usually were made by the presidents of the institutions, thus placing the institutional research offices in a position somewhat removed from the policy center of the activity. Another was the tendency, reported above, to focus on benefits of the activity ~~of~~ to the college itself. Still another in some cases was the subtle nature of the external interest, as illustrated in the two FIPSE regions where few institutional researchers saw the work they were sustaining as potentially, if not actually, contributing to the cause of a new and continuing external body, namely the Councils for Postsecondary Education Development or some modification of these. bodies

The basic premise on which the inquiry presented in this paper proceeded was that a wave of the foreseeable future in postsecondary education is the development of more interorganizational arrangements of the "communiversity" type. The conclusions set forth above (however tentatively they should be viewed) are not encouraging about a possible increasingly influential role of institutional research ~~for~~ either in interinstitutional action ~~and~~ or ~~for~~ in policy planning and decision making by new interests external to the institutions; that outlook stems, we think, from the present lack of notice the field reflects of the organizational changes taking place in postsecondary education. Professionals in institutional research need to devote much more attention to this ~~subject~~ and to the implications that new organizational developments hold for their future.

#

REFERENCES

Education Commission of the States. Challenge: Coordination and governance in the '80s. Denver, CO.: Education Commission of the States, 1980.

Folger, J. and Orwig, M. State agency research. In Peterson, M. (Ed.) Benefiting from interinstitutional research. New directions for institutional research. Winter, 1976, 12. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, pp. 45-56.

Gould, S. Today's academic condition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970.

Hansen, B. The Council of Ontario University's research program. In Peterson, M. (Ed.) Benefiting from interinstitutional research. New directions for institutional research. Winter, 1976, 12. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, pp. 95-100.

Harcleroad, F. (Ed.) Planning for state systems of postsecondary education. Iowa City, IA.: American College Testing Program, 1973.

Holmes, D. Some suggestions about how to use materials from the PACU study of academic programs. Harrisburg, PA.: Pennsylvania Associaton of Colleges and Universities (PACU), 1979. (Unpublished)

Kuhns, E. and Martorana, S. Pennsylvania postsecondary degree programs: need availability, supply, oversupply. Harrisburg, PA.: Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU), 1977.

Martorana, S. and Kuhns, E. The challenge of the communiversity. Change, 1977, 2, pp. 54-55.

Martorana, S. and Kuhns, E. Communiversity developments in selected countries of the western world. Paper delivered at 4th International Conference on Higher Education, University of Lancaster, Lancaster, England, August, 1978a.

Martorana, S. and Kuhns, E. The ecology of academic planning: a methodology for analysis of academic program offerings on a statewide bais. In Fenske, R. and Staskey, P. (Eds.) Research and planning for higher education. Tallashassee, FL.: Association for Institutional Research, 1978, pp. 105-108b.

Martorana, S. and Kuhns, E. Using comparative indices of academic programs in institutional, regional, and statewide planning and decision making: evolution of a movel. In Corcoran, M. (Ed.) Forum papers. Association for Institutional Research, ERIC/Higher Education, 1980.

Martorana, S. and Nespoli, L. Regionalism in American postsecondary education: concepts and practices. University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University, Center for the Study of Higher Education, 1978.

Martorana, S. and Nespoli, L. Regionalism and institutional proximity in statewide planning: coordination, concepts, and principles to counter chaos. Policy studies journal. (Forthcoming)

McBride, J. A model regional open learning system: A first report. Lincoln, NE.: University of Mid-America, 1978.

Norris, D. and Heydinger, R. Effects of computer technology. In Peterson, M. (Ed.), Benefiting from interinstitutional research New directions for institutional research. Winter, 1976, 12. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, pp. 29-44.

Partee-Scott, G. A multi-institutional approach to providing institutional research services. In Planning rational retrenchment. New directions for institutional research, 4, 6. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979, pp. 79-88.

Odegaard, C. Statewide coordination: a personal comment. In Berdahl, R. (Ed.) Evaluating statewide boards. New directions for institutional research. Spring, 1975. 5. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975, pp. 87-96.

Patterson, L. Consortuim directory listing. Montgomery, AL.: University of Alabama, Council for Interinstiutional Leadership, 1979.

Pierce, G. Preparing institutional researchers: a call for regionalization. In Professional development for institutional research. New directions for institutional research. 3, 6. San Francisc: Jossey-Bass, 1979, pp. 89-95.

Peterson, M. (Ed.) Benefiting from interinstitutional research. New directions for institutional research. Winter, 1976, 12. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976.

Saterfiel, T. Institutional research as a service function of higher education: a consortium arrangement with public school districts. Paper presented at the 18th Annual Forum of the Association for Interinstitutional Research. Houston, TX. May 21-25, 1978, p.14.

Schenkman, C. (Ed.) A policy primer for community-based community college. Report of the 1974 Assembly of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Washington: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. 1974.

Wilson, K. College research center: a consortium venture. In New directions for institutional research. 12. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, pp. 79-85.